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BOOK REVIEWS

De l'organisation du Conseil Municipal de Paris. Par HENRI CHRÉTIEN. (Paris: Giard & Brière. 1906. Pp. 232.)

Le problème du mode d'élection des conseillers municipaux de Paris. Par DOMINIQUE PÉNARD. (Paris: Imprimerie Jouve. 1905. Pp. 144.)

La préfecture de police. Par EDMOND MOUNEYRAT. (Paris: Bonvalot-Jouve. 1906. Pp. 194.)

Les secrétaires de mairie. Par R. MARTINEAU. (Paris: Bonvalot-Jouve. 1906. Pp. 188.)

Les exploitations municipales, commerciales, et industrielles en France. Par PIERRE MERCIER. (Paris: Roustan: 1905. Pp. 310.)

Études sur l'œuvre économique des municipalités. Par MAURICE GAUCHERON. (Paris: Bonvalot-Jouve. 1906. Pp. 211.)

The past year has been perhaps unusually fruitful in monographic studies dealing with various phases of French municipal organization and administration. Many of these have dealt with matters of strictly local interest, the organization of a particular city, or with some special public service; but there are at least a half-dozen volumes of moderate compass which may be profitably brought to the notice of American students of comparative municipal government as dealing with topics of general interest.

Two recent volumes deal with the organization and powers of the municipal council of Paris and with the various proposals which have been brought forward from time to time looking to a reorganization or reformation of this body. Dr. Chrétien's treatise attempts a general exposition of the structure and working of the Paris council, dealing first at some length with the history of the body, then in detail with the methods of election, the questions of eligibility of candidates, the procedure of the council, its powers, and its relation to the prefects. A discussion and criticism of the various projects of reform

takes up the last and least important part of the book. The study has been prepared from the laws, from the council records, and from the parliamentary discussions and proceedings; it is well arranged, and gives in convenient form a fair and comprehensive survey of the important body with which it deals. One might have wished, however, that more attention were given to the organization, influence, and programs of the various partisan factions in the council for it is only through a clear understanding of these features that the attitude of the national government toward the work of the council can be properly realized.

M. Pénard's somewhat shorter study does not concern itself mainly with organization and powers, but rather with a criticism of the present method of electing councillors and the present relation of the council to the prefects and to the central authorities. The marked differences in population among the various quarter-arrondissements, ranging from seven to one hundred and eight thousand, is made the basis of a vigorous plea for a redistribution of seats or for some suitable change in the whole machinery of election. The volume shows convincingly that changes in the distribution of Parisian population have thrown the system of conciliar elections badly out of proportion with the result that the council, as at present organized, cannot be said to reflect civic opinion with any reasonable degree of accuracy. The writer does not minimize the important political and other obstacles in the way of any radical change either in organization or in powers; and he is inclined to recognize the desirability, for sentimental reasons, of preserving the arrondissements with their present boundaries, as the territorial bases of election. A considerable number of schemes are analyzed, and the writer sets forth, in his conclusion, a plan of reorganization which seeks to combine the better features of these various prior proposals.

Some four or five years ago students of municipal government in France welcomed a clear and comprehensive exposition of the position and functions of the prefect of the Seine.¹ M. Mouneyrat's volume now affords a concise summary of this official's colleague in the administration of Parisian municipal affairs, the prefect of police. The two monographs taken together provide in compact and reliable

Les Attributions du Préfet de la Seine. Par Eugene Magné de la Londe. (Paris: Rousseau. 1902. Pp. 275.)

form all that the general student of municipal institutions need care to know concerning the direction of administrative matters in the French capital.

After dealing with the history of the police prefecture prior to the establishment of the office in its present form, M. Mouneyrat devotes the major part of his treatise to a systematic analysis of the various powers and duties of the prefect, classifying these under their various heads and defining clearly their scope and limitations. The respective powers of the two prefects are defined with clearness and precision. Considerable attention is also given to the legal nature of various prefectoral acts, distinction being drawn between *actes de gestion*, *actes de puissance publique*, and *actes judiciaires*, and in each case the methods of recourse against the acts and decisions of the official are discussed. In conclusion the writer deals with the annual budget of the prefecture and with the proposals which have been made looking to some change in the position and powers of the prefect of police.

Those who are acquainted with the inner workings of English borough government need not be told of the large and effective part played in the daily routine of administration by that usually hard-worked but almost invariably capable official, the town clerk. M. Martineau's monograph deals with the prototype of this officer in the towns and cities of France. The importance of the *mairie* as a centre of local administrative activity, and the very large amount of routine effectively performed within its walls have been well known to students of local government. But it may be doubted whether the services of the secretary of the *mairie* in the direction and supervision of this work have hitherto been adequately emphasized. The municipal code gives large powers to the mayor of a French city both as administrative head of the commune and as the local agent of the central government. In the exercise of these powers the mayor leans very heavily, however, upon the secretary who by long experience in his office has come to be the custodian of communal traditions.

M. Martineau has condensed a very comprehensive discussion of the position and functions of this important official into small compass, for the book treats fully of the methods of appointment and removal, eligibility, responsibility, remuneration, etc., of the secretary as well as of his daily duties. The volume gives evidence of a careful study of the jurisprudence of the administrative courts relat-

ing to the office and the sources of information are throughout the monograph definitely indicated in a convincing array of footnotes. An excellent bibliography is appended.

Two books which have interest for any who wish to acquire some familiarity with the economic activities of French cities are those of Messrs. Mercier and Gaucheron. The former is somewhat the more elaborate of the two and deals especially with the legal powers of the municipality to engage in productive undertakings. On this point the jurisprudence, especially of the council of State, has become extensive in recent years and the writer has examined it with diligence and care, setting forth the general results with some degree of clearness. The various productive municipal enterprises are discussed one by one, attention being given even to the minor services, such as the municipal bakeries, pharmacies, loan offices, and so forth. A lengthy chapter treats of the financial side of the question and the relation of municipalization to the local tax rate and to the increase of municipal indebtedness. A very useful feature of the volume is a well-selected bibliography of reports, monographs, theses, and articles relating to the question of municipal ownership in French cities.

The treatise of M. Gaucheron is of a somewhat different nature, little attention being given to the legal powers of the municipalities and the main stress laid upon the actual work of the cities along economic lines. The experience of French cities in the matter of water supply, of lighting by gas and electricity, in the provision of means of transportation, in the erection and maintenance of workmen's dwellings, as well as in the provision of several minor services are all summarized. In each case the experience of French municipalities is contrasted with that of various cities in other European countries, particularly with the cities of Great Britain. The volume contains many statistical summaries the compilation of which must have cost the writer much tedious labor. The arrangement of data is not always of the best, but it must be noted that the subject, from the author's standpoint of treatment, does not readily lend itself to symmetrical arrangement. The sources from which figures and facts are drawn have been indicated with definiteness. On the whole, M. Gaucheron's monograph ought to prove highly serviceable to anyone who desires, in compact form, a general survey of what the cities of France have done and are doing in the way of providing both the major and minor public services for their citizens.

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